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ABSTRACT

In 1974, California State University, Chico, and Butte Community College agreed to experiment in offering a joint summer session. This involved holding both planned programs on the Chico campus, coordinating class offerings to minimize duplication in offerings and the times of the offerings, and the sharing of physical facilities such as science laboratories. During the fifth week of the 6-week cooperative session, a survey was made of all students and faculty in the classes being offered by both schools. The questionnaire used was designed to ascertain student and faculty reactions to the experiment and their assessments of various services provided during the summer. In addition, data were obtained on selected demographic characteristics of the summer students and their reasons for attending summer classes. The survey showed that the Chico faculty and students were less positive than the Butte faculty and students as to the benefits derived from the coordinated session. Their respective attitudes were influenced by the fact that the coordinated summer session produced a decline in Chico State student enrollment and caused an increase in enrollment at Butte College. Closer coordination of courses and greater attention to courses jointly offered might minimize the negative effects. (Author/DB)

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STUDENT AND FACULTY RESPONSES TO AN EXPERIMENT IN INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

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The Northeastern California Higher Education Council (NCHEC) is a consortium of six community colleges, California State University, Chico and the University of California at Davis serving the post-secondary education needs of a large segment of Northern California. Among the stated goals of this active organization is the cooperative utilization of facilities among member institutions. Over the years California State University, Chico has used the campuses of a number of the community colleges as a base for offering innovative and successful External Degree programs.

Two members of the NCHEC, Butte College and CSU, Chico agreed in the fall of 1973 to experiment in offering a joint summer session during the summer of 1974. This novel arrangement provided expanded opportunities for students served by the two institutions to pursue lower division, upper division, and graduate level courses at the same location. The joint summer session marked a high point in cooperation and mutual support between the two campuses.

The potential for a combined and coordinated summer session on the CSU, Chico campus was provided since Butte College was abandoning its temporary facility in Durham and was moving to a newly constructed permanent campus. The logistics involved in a move of this magnitude made it impossible for Butte College to carry on its summer session at either of the two locations. However, many of the academic programs of the College incorporate work taken during the summer and a large number of students have come to rely on the summer session; thus it was necessary to provide a summer session somewhere for Butte College students. Since most of Butte College's summer students live in the Chico area, and since CSU, Chico has traditionally offered a strong summer session, it became clear that the place most suitable for the Butte College program was on the campus of California State University, Chico.

The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze this experiment in intersegmental cooperation. In so doing, the identification of a number of implications for other institutions becomes clear. A number of items are essential for success; an early start in the planning and mutual institutional commitments are among the most basic.

After the initial investigation into the feasibility of the experiment and an agreement by the administrations of both institutions to proceed, the first step in the process was a series of meetings to identify concerns, problems, and opportunities and to attempt to reasonably negotiate differences. Agreement was reached with relative ease on matters pertaining to the operation of the physical plant, e.g., custodial services, use of classrooms, insurance, and maintenance. Special purpose meetings dealing with specific items were held to make arrangements for such things as use of the bookstore, student center, library, audio-visual and other instructional media. Each of these meetings produced a reasonable and equitable agreement and very little conflict was encountered.

The most significant cooperation came in the development of the academic programs for the two institutions and the coordination and articulation of these programs. CSU, Chico emphasized the offering of graduate, upper division, and special interest classes, while Butte College concentrated on lower division courses and classes unique to Community College programs. This coordinated planning reduced overlap and competition and provided a well conceived total academic program. A joint summer session schedule of classes was produced and distributed throughout the service area of the two schools. Clearly this effort was one of the high points of the experiment and provided the greatest benefit to the students in the area.

The spirit of the cooperative venture was captured by the attitudes displayed at a meeting of the Student Affairs staffs of the two institutions approximately a month before the beginning of the summer session. It was decided that students would be treated as students, not as Butte College students or CSU, Chico students. Services would be available to all.

A Butte College summer session administrative office was established and located in the facilities of the Chico State summer session office. A separate registration was conducted, but it would have been entirely conceivable to have a joint registration. Since the early planning had anticipated most of the problems, the summer session began and went off without a hitch.

During the fifth week of the six week cooperative session a survey was designed to measure student and faculty reactions to the coordinated session. The survey included all Butte College and Chico State summer classes. Two questionnaires were developed, one for students and the other for faculty. These were distributed to all classes, along with instructions that no one should complete more than one. That is, if a student or instructor completed a questionnaire in an earlier class he or she should not complete another in a second or third class.

A total of 430 responses were received from students enrolled in Chico State courses and 596 from persons taking Butte College classes. In addition, 38 completed questionnaires were returned by Butte College faculty and 38 also from Chico State professors. Due to difficulties having to do with Chico State's computer facility, data on the actual number of people enrolled in the summer session is not yet available. Thus it is not definite at this time as to the percent responses these

figures represent of the total possible sample. It is clear, though, that the majority of summer faculty and students in both schools completed and returned the questionnaires.

There is not time to explore all of the findings of the survey and therefore only the reactions of students and faculty to the overall aspects of the experimental session will be discussed here.

There is absolutely no doubt from the data that Butte College faculty and students felt the coordinated session was beneficial. The responses by Chico State students and faculty were, however, much less positive and the proportion of people indifferent was considerably larger. The findings on this item are detailed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1

Overall reaction to the coordinated summer session, Butte students and faculty, Chico State students and faculty (percent)

Has the coordinated session been generally beneficial or useful?	Faculty		Students	
	Chico	Butte	Chico	Butte
Yes	18.4	92.1	26.9	86.6
No	26.3	0	24.8	4.5
Don't know	50.0	7.9	42.0	7.1
No answer	5.3	0	6.3	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	38	38	430	596

One reason for this large difference between persons in the two schools in their reactions to the session could rest in the extent to which they were involved in and affected by the cooperative venture. As Table 2 shows, Chico faculty were much less likely than Butte instructors to have had any contact with students from the other school. Chico students were also less likely to have met Butte students or teachers than were Butte students to have had

contact with Chico people. In addition, among the students Butte enrollees were much more prone to have taken advantage of extra-curricular activities offered by Chico State than was true for Chico State students with respect to Butte activities. It must be noted, though, that the joint session was held on the Chico campus, and thus its programs (plays, films, etc.) were by far the more prominent.

TABLE 2

Contacts with students and faculty from the other institution, by Butte College students and faculty and Chico State students and faculty; and participation in extra-curricular activities by Butte and Chico students (percent)

Has having this coordinated session:	Faculty		Students	
	Chico	Butte	Chico	Butte
Allowed you to meet students from both schools?				
Yes	10.5	94.7	27.9	77.2
No	84.2	5.3	36.7	10.6
Don't know	2.6	0	30.0	8.7
No answer	2.7	0	5.4	3.5
Allowed you to meet faculty members from both schools?				
Yes	13.2	26.2	18.1	62.1
No	84.2	68.4	46.7	22.3
Don't know	0	5.3	29.5	11.1
No answer	2.6	0	5.7	4.5
Given you an opportunity to take advantage of extra-curricular activities from both schools?				
Yes			11.3	43.4
No			41.3	22.5
Don't know			40.6	27.7
No answer			6.8	6.5

Among the faculty one very important factor which may have shaped their reactions to the session and their interest in becoming involved in it was their perception of its effects upon student enrollments. No Chico State instructors believed, for example, that the coordinated session had increased Chico State summer enrollments, while 52.6 percent of the Butte instructors felt it had increased their school's enrollment. By way of contrast, 42.1 percent of the Chico instructors, compared to 2.6 percent of the Butte instructors, believed that the joint session had decreased enrollment.

This point is particularly important in that summer session courses in both the community college and state university must meet certain minimum enrollment levels in order to be offered. Because of this the number of courses initially scheduled is usually diminished after registration, depending upon the level and distribution of student enrollments. In 1974 this process was followed, as it had been in earlier years, and a number of classes had to be canceled because of inadequate enrollment. The Chico faculty's reaction to the enrollment effects of the session was probably more severe, in that a larger number of Chico classes were dropped (than Butte classes). This can be gauged in another way, by looking at the reaction of faculty and students to the number of courses scheduled and the number actually offered. In Table 3 a comparison is made of the respondents from both schools in terms of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the number of courses scheduled and offered. The increase in the dissatisfaction among Chico faculty is evident from the data, and increases in the degree of dissatisfaction can also be seen among Butte faculty and Chico students, albeit to a lesser degree. Only among Butte College students did the extent of such dissatisfaction decline slightly, and in that instance the movement was to greater indifference rather than greater satisfaction.

TABLE 3

Satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the number of courses scheduled and offered, Butte College faculty and students, Chico State students and faculty (percent)

Generally, during this summer session have you been satisfied or dissatisfied with:	Faculty		Students	
	Chico	Butte	Chico	Butte
The number of courses offered as listed in the schedules?				
Satisfied	57.9	84.2	55.2	59.2
Indifferent	18.4	7.9	11.3	10.1
Dissatisfied	10.5	7.9	31.7	27.9
No answer	13.2	0	1.8	2.8
The actual number of courses offered after registration?				
Satisfied	21.0	60.5	29.2	46.2
Indifferent	13.2	18.4	20.9	27.0
Dissatisfied	52.6	18.4	46.9	21.3
No answer	13.2	2.7	3.0	4.5

Time does not permit pursuing the analysis into a range of more specific facets of the summer programs which were included on the questionnaires. Also, additional cross tabulations are now being run to explore more deeply the nature of some of the relationships covered here. Nonetheless, a few general conclusions can be drawn from this data.

The fact that the coordinated summer session was seen as producing a decline in Chico State student enrollment and an increase in Butte College enrollment undoubtedly put an overriding tint on the perspectives of people from each institution as they viewed other aspects of the effort. From the Chico side, participating in the experiment reduced the number and breadth of summer offerings, making fewer Chico courses available for faculty to teach and students to take. In contrast, Butte students and faculty were more pleased with the session in that they believed it benefited them.

Whether the joint session in fact caused a decline in Chico enrollments has not yet been definitely established. Summer enrollments have generally been declining over the past few years. At the same time it is true that the survey revealed 46.1 percent of the Butte enrollees were regularly Chico State students, while only .4 percent of the Chico students were regularly Butte College enrollees. It is possible, however, that this same situation existed in earlier years as well, but unfortunately no empirical data is now at hand to verify this proposition.

Whether caused by this perspective or not, it is clear that Chico State people (students and faculty) were less affected by the interactional dimensions of the joint session. That is, they had less personal contact with persons from the other school than did Butte students and faculty. Thus, not only did the Chico group believe they suffered in enrollment from the cooperative session, they did not engage in interaction with Butte students and faculty and thus saw less benefit from the program.

In light of this it is hardly surprising that in the open-ended portion of the questionnaire only one Chico faculty member volunteered a positive comment about future summer coordination between Chico and Butte, while three Butte instructors took the time to include positive comments on such future efforts. Among the students only four Chico enrollees remarked that they felt future sessions ought to be cooperative, while 60 (11 percent) of the Butte students added a comment along those lines to their questionnaire.

The findings outlined here should not, and need not, be interpreted as grounds for not holding a coordinated summer session such as this again. The problem, instead, is one of structuring such a program so that neither party to it develops the view that the only products of their involvement are negative, while those for the other party are all positive. Because

of the differences in the summer fee structures of community colleges and state universities, there would be inevitably a flow of students to the community college. Yet closer coordination of the courses proposed, greater attention to courses jointly offered, and similar steps might minimize the negative effects of this movement. At the same time, means could be set in motion to encourage greater interaction among faculty and students from the participating schools. These could be social as well as on scholarly lines. Thus, even if the community college gained enrollment at the expense of the senior school both faculty and students would still be left with the feeling that they gained intellectually and socially from the experience.

Another conclusion that must be drawn from this experiment is, of course, the implication it has for conserving resources. This is especially valid in those areas in which programs might overlap or duplicate one another. The coordination that did take place illustrated that it is possible to cooperate in program planning for the benefit of the students. Despite institutional differences this coordination was done and done successfully.

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